Working Memo #737

DATE: December 8, 1994

TO: OWP Field Office Engineers and Inspectors

THROUGH: Allen R. Hammer, P.E., Director
Division of Water Supply Engineering

Eric H. Bartsch, P.E., Director
Office of Water Programs

FROM: Alan D. Weber, P.E., Field Services Engineer
Division of Water Supply Engineering

SUBJECT: Water - Information - Lead Public Notice

Attached is a Lead Public Notice (Attachment A) which was updated by the Southeast Field Office to reference the action level for lead as contained in the 1991 Lead and Copper Rule. Other offices may find this notice useful as new water systems are still required to provide notification to their customers. A copy of the original notice is also included as Attachment B.

Attachments
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ATTACHMENT A

LEAD PUBLIC NOTICE

The Safe Drinking Water Act passed by Congress in 1986, requires all public water systems to notify consumers about possible lead contamination in drinking water.

In most cases, the major sources of lead exposure are through lead paint and lead contaminated soil and dust. Lesser sources include lead contaminated food, toys, newspapers, pottery, and drinking water.

The United States Environment Protection Agency (EPA) sets drinking water standards and has determined that lead is a health concern at certain levels of exposure. At the time of passage of the 1986 amendments there was a standard of 0.050 parts per million (ppm) for Lead. EPA has since supplanted the standard for an Action Level.

Part of the purpose of the notice is to inform you of the potential adverse health effects of lead. This is being done even though your water may not have been in violation of the standard or the action Level. The Action Level for Lead as contained in the 1991 Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) is 0.015 parts per million (ppm).

EPA and others are concerned about the lead in drinking water. Too much lead in the human body can cause serious damage to the brain, kidneys, nervous system, and red blood cells. The greatest risk, even with short-term exposure, is to young children and pregnant women.

Lead levels in your drinking water are likely to be highest.

* If your building water system has lead pipes or
* If your building has copper pipes with lead solder and

  If the building is less than five years old, or
  If you have soft or acidic water, or
  If water sits in the pipes for several hours.

Lead solder is the most common souce of lead in drinking water. Until 1986, lead-based solder and flux was used widely to join copper pipes. Some drinking water fountains and chillers may also contain lead.

Lead solder will scratch easily and will be shiny when scratched. Lead cannot be seen in water. The only way to determine if it is present is to have a sample of the water tested by a certified laboratory.

If lead is present in the plumbing of your building, the facility manager may already have a daily “flushing” program. This assures regular exchanges of water past sections of pipe containing lead, reducing the time water is in contact with the lead. If you suspect lead contamination in your drinking water, avoid use of taps or fountains that are not regularly flushed to reduce lead content.

Avoid using hot water for drinking or cooking. Hot water dissolves lead more quickly than cold eater.

When plumbing repairs or other plumbing work is done. Federal Law requires that only lead-free solder and lead-free materials are used. It is this waterworks owner’s responsibility to assure that proper plumbing materials are used.

For further information about the drinking ater at this facility, contact:

_____ _____

(contact person) (telephone number)

ATTACHMENT B

LEAD PUBLIC NOTICE

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